

Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area

Bottom Line: The only Principal U.S. Inland Port on Upper Mississippi (Marine Highway 35) north of Locks and Dam 10 is the St. Paul Port Authority, MN. The impact is that not all tonnage reported in Minnesota and Wisconsin is attributed to a federally recognized port. That oversight under-represents the economic value (value of waterborne commerce) to the nation and the world generated by the bi-state area (Wisconsin and Minnesota) above Locks and Dam 10 on the Mississippi River (see bi-state photo centered on La Crosse, WI). It misrepresents the national supply chain. That oversight also reduces opportunities for direct and indirect investment into the region's multi-modal transportation infrastructure and natural infrastructure.



In 2022, the Northern Grain Belt (NGB) Port Statistical Area (PSA) recognition will be applied for by a non-federal sponsor. See below map. Once established, it is anticipated to be a top 100 inland port (based on tonnage handled). This federal recognition of the NGB PSA will better represent the economic value (and the value of waterborne commerce) generated by the bi-state region.

Background: Ports on the very long, narrow segments of the maritime highway system serviced by locks and dams are by their very geographic nature, extended, linear, multi-modal transportation features that are generally around 200 miles in length. They have efficiently dispersed terminals along the waterway close to where grain is grown, and agricultural products are produced. Terminals on the waterways are served by an interconnected network of roads and railways, and compliment nearby industrial and commercial users of the region's multi-modal transportation infrastructure supporting other commodities. The NGB PSA has 34 terminals throughout its region.

Comparable linear ports in the **Upper Mississippi River** Tri-State area (IL, IA, MO) are the Mid-America Port Commission (MAPC) (328.8 River Miles); IL Waterway Ports (175 River Miles); Upper Mississippi River Ports of Iowa and Illinois (221 River Miles). Comparable linear ports in the **Ohio River Basin** are the Ohio River's Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky (226.5 River Miles); the Port of Pittsburgh (200 River Miles); and the Port of Huntington, West Virginia (199 River miles).

Concept: An application will be submitted for approval to the U.S. Waterborne Commerce Statistical Center by the non-federal sponsor. It will include all 11 county resolutions agreeing to be part of the NGB PSA. This agreement is cooperative and does not preclude or prevent other county economic development / transportation arrangements and agreements. Additionally, the NGB PSA has no taxing or bonding authority.

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Benefits: The NGB PSA will: 1) Statistically represent the region as a federally recognized multi-modal port; 2) Inform regional multi-modal transportation planning efforts; 3) Support regional marketing and economic development efforts; 4) Raise the area's profile to improve regional, national and global visibility and competitiveness; 5) Give a competitive edge to attract a wide range of public and private investment; 6) Create a regional multi-modal transportation infrastructure identity; 7) Support sustainability planning efforts; and, 8) Serve the bi-state area and all communities (disadvantaged and economically distressed) as an economic development tool within the region.

